

AO 91 (Rev. 02/09) Criminal Complaint

**FILED**  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

AUG 26 2020

for the  
District of New MexicoMITCHELL R. ELFERS  
CLERK

United States of America )

v. )

BARTON, Steve )  
2716 )Defendant

Case No. MJ 20-1481 KBM

## CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date of 04/19/2020 in the county of Farmington in the \_\_\_\_\_ District of  
New Mexico, the defendant violated Title 18 U. S. C. § 871, 879  
 , an offense described as follows:

one count of threatening the President in violation of Title 18 U.S.C. § 871, and one count of threatening a major  
 candidate for the office of President, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 879.

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Attached

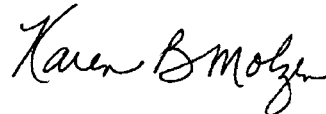
☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Special Agent Thomas Wiedenhaefer

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 08/26/2020

Judge's signature

City and state: Albuquerque, New Mexico

Karen B. Molzen, United States Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

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Criminal Complaint - Continued.

United States of America

V.

SSN: 449-90-2716

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I, Thomas Wiedenhaefer, being duly sworn and under oath, hereby depose and say:

1. I, Thomas Wiedenhaefer, am a Special Agent with the United States Secret Service ("USSS"), and been so employed since April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018. As a member of the USSS Albuquerque resident Office, I am currently tasked to investigate violations of federal law relating to financial crimes and protective intelligence. I had formal training relating to the investigation of financial crimes and protective intelligence during my 32-week Criminal Investigation Training Program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia, and Special Agent Training Course in Beltsville, Maryland. During the performance of my duties, I routinely investigate perpetrators involved in fraudulent financial activities such as credit card fraud, counterfeiting, and bank fraud. I routinely investigate matters of protective intelligence concerning all USSS protectees. I have participated in physical and wire surveillance and the execution of search/arrest warrants. I have also spoken, on numerous occasions, to informants, suspects, and witnesses. I have spoken on numerous occasions to other experienced investigators concerning methods and practices of protective intelligence and financial fraud.
2. I have participated in the investigation of the offenses referred to below, and have been involved in this investigation since August 19, 2020. The information contained in this affidavit is the result of my own personal investigation and information communicated to me by other law enforcement officers, and investigators familiar with these facts and familiar with STEVE WAYNE BARTON.
3. This affidavit is made in support of a complaint against an arrest warrant against STEVE WAYNE BARTON ("BARTON") for violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 871, threats against President and successors to the presidency and for a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 879 threats against major candidates for the office of the President.

**PROBABLE CAUSE**

1. On April 19, 2020, a concerned citizen contacted the United States Secret Service (USSS) Albuquerque Resident Office regarding threatening posts on Facebook by Steve BARTON (<https://www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357>). The subject had posts on account stating "If Trump Wins? Kill Him," "If Biden Wins? Kill Him," "Save America Now! Murder Every Politician Holding Office In America! Start Over," and many other similar threats.
2. On April 20, 2020, Senior Special Agent (SSA) Mark Ruggiero contacted BARTON telephonically due to COVID-19 precautions. SSA Ruggiero's report reads "BARTON was immediately apologetic and cooperative during the call. He stated that he would remove the posts as soon as possible, but that Facebook has put a 30-day freeze on his account. He further stated that he would not make similar posts in the future." Barton also acknowledged during the interview his posts could influence other people, and once again apologized to SSA Ruggiero for making the posts.
3. On August 18, 2020, at 1110 hours EDT, the FBI National Threat Operations Center (NTOC) notified the USSS Protective Intelligence Operations Center (PIOC) of the following incident: On August 12, 2020, at 1403 hours EDT, Facebook user [XXXXXXXX@msn.com](mailto:XXXXXXXX@msn.com) (username masked to protect the identity of the user) reported a post "TRUMP IS SATAN! KILL HIM & HIS FAMILY! THIS IS MY COMMAND!" The complainant reported the post was made by Steve Barton.
4. On August 19, 2020, the USSS PIOC requested I locate and interview BARTON in reference to the FBI NTOC report. I attempted to contact BARTON telephonically five times on August 20, 2020. I attempted to speak to B.B., BARTON'S mother who lives with him. After identifying myself, she hung up and did not answer my immediate call back. After telephonic attempts to contact BARTON failed, I requested the USSS PIOC prepare a full open source intelligence (OSINT) investigation into BARTON'S social media posts.
5. USSS intelligence analyst Sarah Moss revealed BARTON has created four different Facebook profiles, two of which contained threats relevant to this investigation. When posting a threat, BARTON would often include a hyperlink to the other accounts with a notation that additional information was available in his three other accounts. The first account belonging to BARTON, [www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357](https://www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357), which is publically viewable, revealed multiple threats against President Donald Trump and Former Vice President Joe Biden. Threats included the following:

- On April 19, 2020, "If Trump Wins? Kill Him," "If Biden Wins? Kill Him," "Save America Now! Murder Every Politician Holding Office In America! Start Over."
  - On June 18, 2020, "SHOOT DEAD ON SIGHT! THAT'S A FUCKING COMMAND! DO IT NOW!!!!" This post was alongside an article about President Donald Trump.
  - On June 23, 2020, "I HAVE A LIST OF POLITICIANS TO BE HUNG BY THE NECK TELEVISED..."
  - On June 24, 2020, "KILL TRUMP NOW."
  - On August 19, 2020, "BRING ME THE HEAD OF DONALD TRUMP AND JOE BIDEN..."
6. The second Facebook account in which BARTON issued threats was created under the fictitious name David House, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100050668581353>. This account revealed numerous threatening posts towards President Donald Trump. BARTON referred to POTUS as "Satan." The Facebook page also contained many posts about President Donald Trump, Former Vice President Joe Biden, and celebrities. Threats included:
- On July 23, 2020, "BRING ME PRESIDENT DONALD JOHN TRUMP! I AM GOING TO SHOOT HIM IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD ON NATIONAL TELEVISION! PELASE+\*"
  - On July 26, 2020, "EVERYONE IS FORGIVEN WHEN SATAN IS DEAD!+\*"
7. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, USSS intelligence analyst Michelle Faulkner provided me a copy of a Facebook live video BARTON posted to [www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357](https://www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357) on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020. In the video viewable to the public, <https://www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357/videos/307639603721908>, BARTON threatens to shoot President Donald Trump multiple times. BARTON narrates the video then turns the camera on himself when he makes the threats. The transcript starting at 1:14 into the video to conclusion, is as follows:
- "It's Satan doing everything to the whole family. And it affects us, but we got it to where we can handle everything. You know if ya'll where able to bring President Trump here to me, I would really enjoy every news media in the world being here and watching me put a bullet right through his head. K, that would be good. Let's do that. Cause if we get rid of Satan the rest of em are gonna fold up, ok. So bring Trump here, that's why I opened up the airport a couple months ago. San Juan regional airport in Farmington New Mexico. You can land a plane with the president and bring him here and let me fucking blow his head out. Ok, let's do that. What do, it'll be fun, get him here, ok. An then

everything changes instantly. Thank you, I love you. And Trump, I'm fixing to blow your fucking head off, piece of fucking shit."

8. On August 25<sup>th</sup>, San Juan County Sheriff's deputy Eric Barlow and I interviewed BARTON at his residence located at 4705 Arctic Ct, Farmington, New Mexico 87402. I provided BARTON with screen shots of his Facebook account Steve Barton [www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357](https://www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357) and David House [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100050668581353](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100050668581353). BARTON admitted those were indeed his accounts. BARTON also stated that only he has access to the accounts and is the only person who has posted content to the profiles. He stated the content consisted of proof the government is killing us with chemical trails. I showed BARTON a few posts containing threats to President Donald Trump and Former Vice President/Presidential Candidate Joe Biden and he replied he will stop with the threatening posts. BARTON additionally admitted he alone controlled and posted on four Facebook accounts: [www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357](https://www.facebook.com/steve.barton.129357), <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100050668581353>, <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100049327485025>, and <https://www.facebook.com/steve.s.barton1>. BARTON stated he had four accounts because people report his posts and threats, which results in temporary bans from his accounts.
9. Based on the aforementioned facts your affiant opines that there is probable cause to believe Steve BARTON did commit one count of threatening the President in violation of Title 18 U.S.C. § 871, and one count of threatening a major candidate for the office of President, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 879.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas Wiedenhaefer  
Special Agent  
USSS

Subscribed and sworn to, before me  
on August 26, 2020:



UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE